

The Stars and Stripes

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THE LOST CHAPTER

To the A.E.F. was accorded the high privilege of being a principal in the greatest drama in all history. But no matter how much the individual American in France has seen, no matter how close he has got to the beating heart of the tragedy, he will never know the whole story. A certain momentous chapter of the war can never be written into his spiritual biography. It is not his fault. It must be blamed on that elementary geometrical axiom that one body cannot occupy two different parts of space at the same time.

That chapter is called "America, 1917-1919." It is a chronicle of fortune, determination, heartburning, anxiety, grief, pride and realization. The A.E.F. can never know what it meant to see the casualty lists day after day, to read the glittering accounts of its own prowess, to learn, one September morning, that "The First American Army today struck its first blow."

It can never know the full story of the shipyards, the munition factories, the loan campaigns, the whole vitalizing and quickening transformation that put the moral and physical force of a hundred million squarely behind it.

Letters have told much of it; more of it will be told around the family board in the not tremendously distant future. And with that second-hand account the returned A.E.F. will have to be content. It is hard to have missed such an experience; it would have been harder to miss that other experience which the A.E.F. did not.

SAM BROWNE

The fact that the Sam Browne cannot be worn in the continental United States is causing considerable comment in the A.E.F. This comment is confined largely to officers, but there is so much of it that a surplus issue could be provided for the entire Army.

It appears that a lot of officers are looking forward to tweeds and sergeants and derby hats. This fact alone establishes between the officer personnel and the rank and file a great bond of human fellowship that cannot and does not develop in the orderly room and at Saturday inspections.

The main objection to the order can be summarized as follows: "If I cannot wear my Sam Browne when I get home, I shall have to buy another uniform to be at all presentable—another uniform, and just for a few days' wear. When I am shorn of my Sam Browne, a streak of paler O.D. is visible around my shoulder, down my back, and across my chest. It is exactly what happens when, deciding that the lithograph of The Midnight Fire Alarm will no longer do on the sitting room wall in these cultured days, you take it down and expose a great rectangle of unfaded wall paper."

This may be. But will not the streak of unfaded O.D. where the Sam Browne used to lie constitute a service stripe, a mark of overseas service, as surely and certainly as do the chevrons on the left sleeve?

THE CURTAIN RISES

Wild Willie of Montoir, a dark soldier whose temperament has led him to spend in the local bistro a scandalously large part of his 13 months in France, has at last been recognized for what he really always was—an incorrigible comedian. Now, as the star of a touring minstrel unit, he is much too busy for court martials and such distractions. His songs and monologues—particularly the one entitled "Thoughts 'bout dese M.P.'s"—are a riot in St. Nazaire, and, indeed, he plays to S.R.O. throughout the S.O.S. Meanwhile the provost authorities of Montoir hardly know what to do with their new-found leisure.

The moral of Wild Willie is not lost on G.I.Q., for entertainments are now provided for in general orders. The staff is taking them up as it would coffee or underwear or any other Army necessity.

G.I.Q., of course, is not putting itself in the foolish position of sternly ordering the troops to go forth and entertain themselves. It does not have to. It is merely clearing the stage for the inevitable epidemic of amateur dramatics much as a hospital automatically gets ready some meagre wards when a camp opens up near by. To order idle soldiers to give some shows would be like insisting on their wanting to go home. They would do it any way.

Nor would any show issued to them serve half so well. Not Elsie Janis—to whom this newspaper can hardly be said to be hostile—not all the great folks of the stage can hand an outfit as many hugs as its own privates in petticoats, its own sergeants in skirts.

FOR GOERS HOME

Reports from the United States indicate that every returning member of the A.E.F., the moment he is allowed to roam at all freely in any Atlantic port, will be called upon to exercise far more bravery than he ever did up forward, far more patience than he ever did while he was waiting for the boat to take him home, far more tact and diplomacy than when he was trying to negotiate an extra order of "ools" from madame at the little restaurant around the corner. For it seems that the population of the United States, male, female and prohibitionist, is bent on one thing, and one thing only: Talking personally to every service-striped soldier that it individually and collectively meets.

But being the case, it would well behoove every man whose outfit is due to sail

shortly to frame up zippy, original answers to such questions as the following:

"Wasn't it a horrible war?"

"Did you know a boy—I think he was in the Infantry—named Jones?"

"How did you like France?"

"What do you think of the little old U.S.A., now that you've got back to it?"

The more varied and interesting the answers to that inevitable barrage, the more content—and yet the more nonplussed—the good folks at home will be. It would be unfair to them if our returning heroes all handed out the same stereotyped replies. In order to save their feelings and relieve the monotony of their existence, a little variety simply must be brought into play. A cheery "Hell, yes!" in response to all inquiries would never, never do.

ONE WEAKNESS OF THE Y

To be thoroughly fashionable these days it is absolutely essential to jump on the Y.M.C.A. All the best people are doing it. An investigation of the Red Triangle has been in progress in the States, and the same newspapers which, a few months ago, were rashly giving over their columns to quite unscrutinized publicity for the Y are now devoting those columns to the most blistering criticism.

Out of all the jabber there will probably emerge the fact that the Y.M.C.A. was unexpectedly burdened with a much bigger task than it could possibly have performed to the satisfaction of all concerned, and that it was chiefly handicapped by an unfortunately chosen personnel. In its personnel its chief weakness has lain.

And on this point it should be remembered that the Y, unlike the Government, had to take what it could get. It could not draft, and it was obliged to do its recruiting for a most difficult job after the best America could boast in youth and enthusiasm had already been pledged to the Army or Navy.

How difficult its problem was you will never appreciate till you try to select a half a dozen ideal Y secretaries from among your own acquaintances. Old Shag Brown, the former football star, you say. But Brown was an Artillery officer—graduate of the first Plattsburg camp. Buck Jones, then. But Buck has five kids and couldn't possibly walk out on them. Well, then, Hank Norton. Ah, but Norton enlisted in the Infantry and was killed leading his platoon on November 11. You see, it wasn't easy. Perhaps it would have been better if the Y.M.C.A. had been a mere shell to receive the money the home folks were sure to want to blow on luxuries for their boys at war, a great place to catch not only the millions of the oil kings, but the nickels of the washwomen. The personnel to distribute all these bounties could have been chosen from the Army's own ranks—as time went on—from among the men crippled in the fighting. A wounded man would have made the ideal Y.M.C.A. secretary. There was no one else in all the world who could have understood soldiers so well or been so well understood by them.

OUR FIRST WAR SONG

Although practically all the old standbys in the song line have been tried out at one time or another during the last 18 months and more of the A.E.F.'s history, there is one martial lay, the great-grand-daddy of them all, that has never been rendered often enough to make it a staple. As far as is known, the only time it was ever seriously trotted out for inspection was when a certain thoroughly depraved and unscrupulous New England unit whistled it while marching through the streets of Southampton, England.

Its name is "Yankee Doodle." It was the "Tipperary" of the "Madelon" of the first war in which the American Army, as an American Army, ever engaged. Played by the Moodus, Connecticut, Fife and Drum Corps it can still stir the sluggish soul to martial resolve—possibly because the members of the Moodus Fife and Drum Corps still wear the uniform of the battered old Continentals, and can each of them trace ancestry back to those hairless but none the less efficient fighting men.

Why has it not been sung more over here? It used to be in all the school books and in some effete and backward downstate communities it used to be sung in the kindergarten. But, in France, everybody knew it, but nobody sang it. What's the answer?

Was it respect for our Allies of over-channel, "united now to save"? Was it fear that the original words (as not taught in the downstate kindergartens) might crop out—for the way the Continentals sang it, Yankee Doodle did not stick the feather in his hat? Or was it just plain neglect?

THE BEST SOUVENIR

We have noticed that in moments of stress during craps or poker, there is likely to appear suddenly amid all the fragile, shredded, pale blue bank-notes, a strange-looking, indestructible, green bill which is finally recognized, with something of a start, as currency from a distant country called America. On such occasions, it changes hands a few times and then vanishes forever, for in every group of Yanks there is sure to be one who keeps an inviolable place in the old wallet for a cache of real money—a reserve fund never to be tapped this side of Sandy Hook. And that one has the right idea.

In the good old Argonne days, when the chance of ever returning to America seemed slim, it may have been reasonable to spend money like vin ordinaire—to scatter riotously every franc that could—at long and uncertain intervals—be piled loose from the coy and elusive Q.M. But now is the time to hang on to every one. There is no form of excess baggage which can so easily be slipped by the petulant R.T.O. There is no brand of souvenir which will make such a hit in America. Without a collection of such souvenirs, that fond dream of yours of taking a few months off when you get home will remain a fond dream.

Hold tight to your 50-franc notes. It is true that each one will buy a luger or a lot of wine or a German helmet or a couple of fried eggs. But this also is true: Each one will buy nine dollars and 20 cents.

The Army's Poets

OUR TOP-KICKER

(Dedicated to 1st Sgt. Ben Gould, Co. D, 306th Infantry, killed in action about September 12, in front of Yaucerre, by the Alsace.)

As strict as iron, as tough as rust,
A bulging bean, a hard-boiled crust,
He grumbled like hell, he cursed like smoke,
He made the K.P.'s snip and broke
The sergeants, corporals, first class bloke.
Some wool.

Was our top-kicker.
He pulled it rough—some yegg—some guy,
On guard, in ranks—that eye, that "I."
We told the line, we held the mark;
He dressed us, pressed us with a bark
And took the joy from many a lark.
Some out.

Was our top-kicker.
He warmed the chill "up there, out front"
With soft-like hand in steel that's blunt.
He fed us, led us, picked bon slopes
And plugged the core from us poor nopes
And on our way jerked up our hopes.
Some heart.

Had our top-kicker.
He's busted now, he's in the ranks
With Jims and Joes and Toms and Hanks,
All marked with crosses true and straight.
We love him now where once 'twas hate.
And this we write upon his slate:

"Some soldier."
Was our top-kicker."
Victor M. Shapiro,
Reg. Sgt. Maj., Hq. Co., 306th Inf.

DRINKING SONG

Where y' goin', Jack? Home?
(Sawright, I'll buy)
Goin' back, eh? So'm

When y' callin', Jack? Damn!
Looks awful blue!
Casual, huh? I am.
Too.

Tried to get my discharge
Over here—lotta pep.
Goin' AW at large—
Yep.

'Cause, as you play, mumzelle!
Been a great year!
Things suit me pretty well
Here.

Wish 'at I'd never been born.
(Now, gotta leave me buy.)
Whole goddam country's gone
Dry.

SEMPER INFIDELIS

Love, the day has come for parting.
Here our ways divide,
Dry these tears I know are starting;
Soon the waves I'll ride.

Yes, we've been the closest buddies,
Closer than a shirt,
In a land where only mud is
Mud and dirt.

Off when aching emul's tank its
Fangs into my heart,
Then you shared my lonely blankets,
Swearing ne'er to part.

But another cross the water
Patient, waits for me,
Though you cheered me through the slaughter,
So, ma chere, did she.

True the words the poet saith, full,
Full of bitter gall and blight;
"Man is seldom ever faithful"
When he's out of sight.

Should you sail across the ocean,
Pillowed on my breast,
You would wake an old emotion
And disturb my rest.

Should you reach my native city,
'Twould but cause another pain;
I'd be sent (with language pretty)
Back to France again.

Yes, now hopes are through me coursing,
Though 'tis hard to tell,
Comes the day of my de-lousing—
Cootie, fare thee well!

CASUAL.

THE CHAIN OF CONTENTMENT

When the slum seems far too stummy and the coffee is a crime,
And it's rice for breakfast, rice for lunch, and rice for supper time,
Remember that your outfit may be chowing in the rule.

And forge a link of "might be worse" into contentment's chain.

When the bullets once more whistle, though you know it's but a dream
And again you hear, like yesterday, that awful shrill scream
Just lean back on your pillow and with all your might and main
Try to forge a link of Yankee grit into contentment's chain.

The leg keeps throbbing all night long and how the Aveugles cry,
The orderly's not orderly, the "Daktina" will not take;
You toss from side to side and moan, and groan and shriek with pain.

"At ease!"—a link of "might have been" for your contentment's chain.

When the D train comes to take the men upon the voyage back
And others of class A are formed along the rail-road track
And neither is for you and in the ward you must remain,
Just forge a link of "What's the odds?" into contentment's chain.

And when your chain is forged so well that every link is strong
Just put one in for patience end, old scout, it won't be long
Before the winches rattle and they tie your transport fast.

By a chain of rest contentment—and it's "Home Again!" at last!

E. H. W. L., 9th Inf.

THE VANGUARD

You are members of the outfit,
You are the advance of the gun,
And you follow through the wheat fields
To the blasting of the Hun.

But the members, ah, the members
Who are the outfit's heart!
Who have signed the roll forever
And who never may depart!

But who lead you now and always,
With the caisson and the gun,
Through the wheat and through the poppies
To the blasting of the Hun!

Those whose names abide eternal,
Written large, in meekly sweet—
They're the lads you left behind you
With the poppies in the wheat.

There is Keachle, there is Barber,
There is Gage and McManhan,
There is Phares, there is Harvey—
They're the outfit's fighting van!

And always will you see them
With the caisson and the gun,
Ever pushing on before you
To the blasting of the Hun.

Where the white chalk road goes winding
Through the silent shell-wrecked town,
Past the cross outside the village,
Through the wheat and o'er the down.

They will guide the caissons onward
And they never will depart.
They have signed the outfit's muster
With the red blood of the heart.

You are members of the outfit;
You, the servants of the gun,
And you follow through the wheat fields
To the blasting of the Hun.

But the vanguard on before you
Whom you follow, are meet—
They're the lads you left behind you
With the poppies in the wheat.

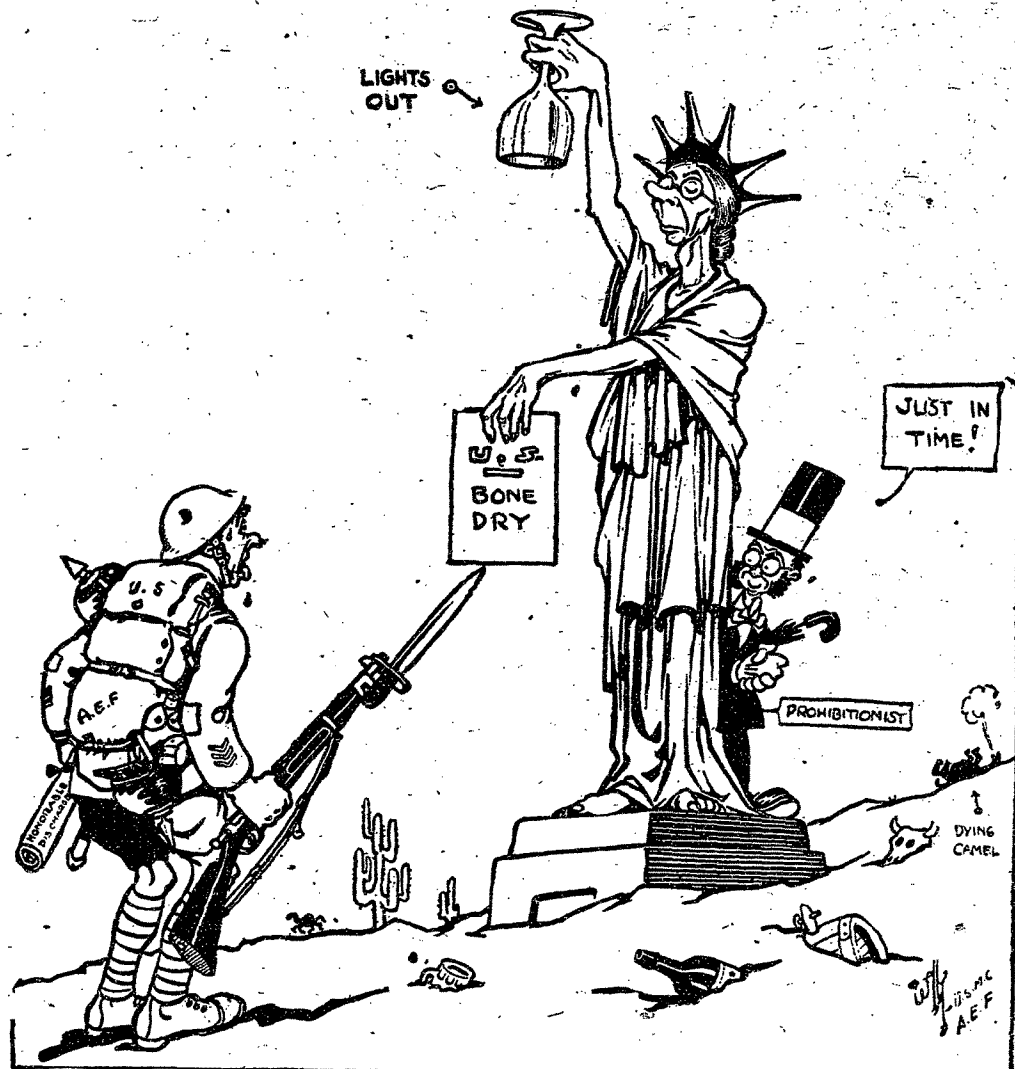
HELLO, STATES!

To tune of "Goodbye, Broadway, Hello, France."
Goodbye, trenches, hell, States,
We're coming back to stay!
Goodbye whizz-bangs, Huns and cooties,
We don't like your way!

Bully beef, we're full of you;
We want no more hard-tack;
To goodby, troops, hello, States!
Your soldier boys are coming back.

HUCK J. SCHUCK, Sgt., Co. C, 4th Engrs.

MY, HOW SHE HAS CHANGED!



PROHIBITION: SOME A.E.F. VIEWS

"America has gone dry," said the cables. Forthwith this office was swamped with dispatches from all over the A.E.F. describing the effect of the announcement in various scattered military circles. In some of these circles the radii were completely dislocated. The swamp continues, the only portion of the A.E.F. which has not yet been heard from being Russia, land of the six-months-long Arctic night. The reason for this is the fact that the news has not yet reached there. When it does the night will be no lighter than it ever was before, it is said.

The only group on whom the news has had no effect to date is a battery of Maine artillerymen, who, when informed of the event, merely asked: "What is prohibition?" "What has it to do with the licker question?"

Someone who carries the radii of authenticity of the following dispatches is requested to communicate with the Department of Distilleries, A.P.O. 7777, Lower California, Mex.

THIRPOT, Jan. 23.—Several troop transports have landed on the North African coast, having gone astray at sea. It is alleged that the captains became confused and made for the Sahara desert. The troops were all singing:

It's home, boys, home
It's home we should-a been,
Home boys, home,
In the land of Liberty (prolonged laughter).

VERDUN, Jan. 23.—Every lot in the so-called American quarter, set aside for the use of veterans of the A.E.F. who desire to establish homes in France, has been sold. The quarter comprises ten streets, five sold in five at right angles, with a monument in the center, which will be known as the Place Grenadine. A café will be set up at each of the 64 corners, according to present plans. A brass rail factory has already started work, but may have to discontinue owing to influx of second-hand fixtures from overseas.

TOURS, Jan. 23.—Applications for transfers to the Department of Rents, Requisitions and Claims, billed (by no one who knows anything about it) as "the last bunch to go," have swamped the local post office.

PAULILLAC, Jan. 23.—The U.S.A. has nothing on this place. Paulillac went dry 24 hours after the news was received from the States. More has been ordered by wire.

REIMS, Jan. 23.—American soldiers will not form part of the Champagne guards now being organized in this city, it was announced today. Original plans called for a battalion of A.E.F. veterans, to protect the famous liquid deposits, and a detachment of skilled

Engineers (Forestry) was to have been brought here to aid in blasting out cobwebs from the more deeply hidden vineyards. Latest announcements, however, state that these troops will be formed into a Home Guard Division in the Moonshine district of the United States.

PORTLAND, Ore., Jan. 20.—(Delayed in transmission)—Dr. Carl Doney, who went within three miles of the German lines when in France on auxiliary service work, was not at home when your correspondent rang his bell today. Not wishing to be outdone by his rivals in the A.E.F. base ports, however, your correspondent has faked the following interview: "I am greatly pleased with the result. I am leaving in a day or two to reform France."

LIVERPOOL, Jan. 23.—Seventeen hundred American soldiers will reach America 27 hours later than was intended as the result of an episode preceding their departure here today. As they marched to their vessel, the Megalomania, they sang:

Shut a song of sixpence,
Pocket full o' rye,
An alert embarkation official, catching the words, insisted that every man be searched again before boarding the transport. Results of the inquiry have been kept secret.

ST. AIGNAN, Jan. 23.—Sgt. Iva Weigh, once of Atlanta, was engaged in extricating his other foot from a mud puddle when the news of prohibition reached this town. "My experience with prohibition," he said, "is that it greatly increased the cost of licker in Georgia."

HOCKELSDORF, GERMANY, Jan. 23.—When the news of prohibition reached here, Sgt. James Geharty Gee fainted. He was able to sit up the next day, and could be heard singing in a weak voice:

Glorious, glorious!
One glass of strawberry ice cream soda for the four of us!

GIEVRES, Jan. 23.—The Baggage Service here has received many letters similar to the following:

From: Corporal Archibald K. Thirsty.
To: The Baggage Service.
Subject: "Packaging."
1. How much baggage can a fellow take home who carries no equipment?
2. What is the exact weight of a keg of vin rouge?

BONDEAUX, Jan. 23.—Colonel Whozzis was reading his morning G.O.'s when interviewed about prohibition here this morning. He said, "Damn."

BREST, Jan. 23.—Local drug stores report an unprecedented sale of hair tonic, and exclusively to departing American soldiers.

AMERICA IN ITALY

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—Never having seen a letter from a member of this regiment, or, in fact, from any member of the A.E.F. in Italy, I thought it a good idea to give you a little first-hand information of at least one of our activities.

On New Year's Day our justly celebrated band and an honor guard of 25 went to Rome to add a little touch of O.D. to the solid Italian gray on the occasion of the President's visit. We did not march in the parade from the station to the President's temporary residence, but, owing to our natural football proclivities, we secured a point of vantage from which we saw the big show.

However, the following morning, as the band formed in the street fronting Red Cross headquarters, Band Leader Sims charmingly acquiesced to the pleading of the Red Cross ladies for a "little American music," and started off with a medley consisting of "Maryland, My Maryland," "Long, Long Ago," and "The Star-Spangled Banner."

And, as the band played, the crowd gathered to the Ambassador's home. After the concert played during the Presidential dinner to Italy's King, someone in charge remembered that doughboy handmen have stomachs, and kindly invited the band

upstairs to share in the feast and use the same table and rooms as the elite of Italy and America. For the next half hour there was a confused sound which Irvin Cobb would call "eating in several languages," and roast pigeon, cake, ice cream, juicy steaks, as well as champagne and several other "vins," found their way into capacious doughboy mouths.

The table had been covered with red roses, hyacinths and ferns when we entered, but when we made our exit nothing but ferns remained. As we say in Italy, there were "mold!" souvenirs. A few lucky boys found place cards of the great ones, and perhaps 25 years from now will be telling all about the time they dined so royally at Rome at the same table that the King of Italy and the President of the United States had used.

JOSEPH LEITAU,
Bn. Sgt. Maj., 332nd Inf.

THE GOLD STARS

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—The other day, while looking over a late issue of the Army newspaper, an idea came to my mind. It may have been thought of before, but I thought I would write to you and mention it anyway. It is:

Eventually all service flags will be taken down, folded up, and laid away with memories, the blue and silver when the soldier returns home, but how about the gold star flags—where there will be no soldier to return home? Why not have a national gold star day, when the golden starred flags will be taken down, folded up, and laid away with their memories?

Cpl. WILBIE LONG, 33rd M.P. Co.

ENFORCING ORDERS

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—Company B, 304th Labor Battalion, on duty at Hq. S.O.S. for the past year, boasts what I believe to be the largest pot cutter of any organization of colored troops in the United States Army.

To handle satisfactorily an organization of its kind in a city the size of Tours has been a job that required a top sergeant of unusual parts. He has had to know the characteristics and abilities of his men as well as to know the extent of his authority and the limit of his personal ability.

Sgt. Edward Blount, the man in question, is six feet four inches in his stocking feet, and weighs over two hundred. He has been top sergeant of the company more than one year and has never had to call upon an officer to enforce his orders. So far as is known, no soldier has ever bucked at his orders, and he has never been called upon to use physical force. The following incident shows that his methods are both original and effective:

The company commander, having learned that the men were gambling in quarters, gave orders that it should cease. Sgt. Blount thereupon made the following announcement at the noon formation for mess:

"Now, you niggers, listen to me. De cap'n done give orders foh gambin' to cease in quarters. Et de gambin' don't cease, Ise goin' to be a buck private. Et Ise a buck private, de hostipite is gwine to be dam full. Right face; forward march."

There has been no more gambling in quarters.

GEORGE K. SNOW,
1st Lt., Q.M.C.